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ABSTRACT

This document outlines a slide presentation on Southeast Asia with primary emphasis on Indonesia. How international trade has influenced the design and development of Indonesian arts, crafts, and architecture are main points of interest. A geographical overview of Indonesia is described along with its natural resources, population, and religious practices. Indonesia's history focuses on the indigenous culture of the people who migrated and developed the land. Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islamic religions spread to Indonesia through foreign trade and impacted on the visual arts throughout the centuries. The paper concludes with personal thoughts and experiences about visiting Indonesia. (JAG)

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ED 391 730

THE HISTORICAL INFLUENCE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND RELIGION ON THE ARTS, CRAFTS AND ARCHITECTURE OF INDONESIA

Fulbright-Hays Summer Seminar Seminars Abroad
Report-1993

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OBJECTIVES:To develop an interdisciplinary slide lectures series as part of a collaboration between the social studies department and the visual arts department at our high school on the art and architecture of Asia.

To develop a series of motivational slide lecture for studio arts and crafts classes that address the origins, influences and diversity of eastern art, design and architecture in both a historical and contemporary context.

To develop a slide lecture for presentation for local Continuing Education courses, as well as local clubs and organizations on topics relating to Southeast Asia and in particular, Indonesia.

Strategies: To present this slide lecture to high school social studies classes, advanced arts & craft classes.

To present this slide lecture to community groups such as The Nathan - Mayhew Seminars, The Vineyard Craftsman Association or the Martha's Vineyard Art Association.

Materials: Notes made from personal contacts made with Indonesian scholars, artists, craftsman and educators.

Slides shot; periodicals and books and research data purchased in Indonesia

Questions: How has international trade influenced the arts and crafts in Indonesia both historically and today?

What is modern Indonesia contribution to contemporary art, crafts, architecture, photography, media communications, fashion etc.?

What are the a differences and similiarities between eastern and western island traditional arts, crafts and aesthetic values?

INTRODUCTION

This report is presented in two parts:

The first section is written in an expanded outline form and is designed in a manner that I use when giving classroom slide lectures. The slide lectures have been designed for three different audiences and can be modified by omitting, modifying or emphasizing various sections during the presentation. It is important to remember that their are over 100 slides that accompany this outline.

The second section summarizes a few personal insights, thoughts and reflections on the Fulbright Summer Seminiar in Indonesia.

I. Geographical Overview

A. Worlds largest archipelago

1. The with of the USA

2.

B. Over 400 volcano

1. 200 active

C. Worlds fourth largest population

1. 180 Million

2. after China, India, United States

D. Worlds largest Muslim population

1. different from middle eastern

E. Rich in natural resources

1. oil, rubber, wood, spices

F. Strategically important

1. links two oceans & two continents

2.

II. Historical Overview

A. Java Man

1. the original homo erectus was discovered by a Dutch anthropologist

B. Where Columbus was headed

1. looking for the spice islands

C. Like the states

1. a large indigenous culture colonized and influenced by numerous cultural and religious groups

2.

III. Indigenous cultural perspectives

A. Migrations

1. *Crossroads of ancient trade routes between India and china. Also from Africa*

B. Agricultural villages & small kingdoms

1. *unique cultures, economies*

C. Animism

1. *The belief that everything has a spirit force or semanat (people ,objects, weather)*
2. *Some people have more semanat than others Priests,shamans, kings and have the power to control the spirit forces.*
3. *Supernatural forces(earthquakes,storms) are the work of spirits and have to be placated by offerings, rites and rituals,*
4. *The dead need to be honored because their semanat can help the living*
5. *It is the myths and ceremonies which form the basis for the masks, costumes, jewelry, dances, music and architecture of every culture(Native Americans, Aborigines, African,Incas)*

D. Visual arts,crafts & architecture

1. *Masks,costumes, & jewelry*
2. *Cloth*
   a) batak-wax resist
   b) Ikat- weaving dyed threads
   c) songket-silk cloth with woven gold& silver thread
3. *Weapons & musical instruments*
4. *Rattan, wood, ceramic, bone, stone & metal work*
5. *Architecture*

IV. The Influence of foreign trade & religion

A. Asian Indian Hinduism(1000 BC to present)

1. What is Hinduism?

a) One of the worlds oldest religions

b) founded in India & what is now Pakistan

c) The belief that the soul of an individual is reborn over and over again through reincarnation

d) Freedom from this cycle depends on ones Karma

e) Good actions bring good Karma and result in a higher incarnation(Bad actions ...lower incarnation

f) One is born into a caste hierarchy until you die

(1) Brahman-priest (highest)

(2) Kshatriya-soldiers & govenors

(3) Valsyds-tradespeople farmers

(4) Sudras- menial workers & craftsman

g) Westerners are confused by so many gods. The many gods need to understood as parts of one whole God

(1) Brama-The creator

(2) Visnu-The Preserver

(3) Shiva- The Destroyer

h) Hindu bible

(1) Bhagavad Gita (by soldier Krishna)

(2) Ramayana (Prince Rama)

i) As many variations of Hinduism as Protestantism

B. Indonesian Hinduism

1. Primarily in Bali

a) No deep water ports so the traders didn't settle

b) So Bali developed on its own

c) No separation between religion and daily life

d)

2. Balinese Hinduism

a) Closer to animism than Indian Hinduism

b) Nothing happens by chance

c) If something god or bad happens, its suppose to according to your Karma.

d) A feeling culture not a thinking culture

(1) They don't talk about love and beauty because the words don' exist in their vocabulary. They feel &experience it.

e) Everywhere you go people are making or placing offerings of simple and complicated rattan baskets, flowers, fruit, feathers etc. Their everywhere

f) Offerings put a positive spin on ones Karma and quiet the gods, the spirits & dead relatives

g) Weddings and funerals are major events in which everyone in the community is involved

C. Hinduism influence on the Visual Arts

1. Balinese belief in a spirit force that moves through the artist to create the worker dance

2. They call it Tak-Su

a) Masks,costumes, & jewelry

(1) Wayang puppet shows are rooted in Javian indigenous culture but todays stories are Hindu or even Islamic

b) Cloth

c) Weapons & musical instruments

d) Rattan, wood, ceramic, bone, stone & metal work

e) Architecture

(1) Prambanan

(a) "At this time, central Java became

one of the most impressive building booms in the history of the world. Using boulders of volcanic stone the Javanise constructed 3 large and hundreds of smaller temples, shrines and other religious structures dedicated to the Gods of Hinduism, each filled with stone and bronze statues of their deities."

(b)

(c)

D Buddhism(8 to 10 century AD to present)

1. *Evolved from Hinduism and was Founded in India by Siddhartha Gautama*

   a) a prince who left his luxury life in search of life beyond the material world by living in simplicity and meditation. At 30 he achieved enlightenment and therefore became the Buddha

   b) He founded an order of monks and for 45 years preached his ideas to them until he died He was not the only Buddha, but the fourth and is not expected to be the last

   c) Buddha taught that happiness in life can only be achieved by going beyond life's suffering through the eight fold path to nirvana, a condition beyond the limits of the mind where one is no longer oppressed by earthly desires

   d)

2. ***Buddhism is more a philosophy than a religion because it is not centered on a God.***

E. Indonesian Buddhism

1. *Mixed with the island cultures in the same way Indian Hinduism did delineating it from India and blending with the indigenous culture*
2.

F. Buddhism's Influence on the Visual Arts

1. *Masks,costumes, & jewelry*
2. *Cloth*
3. *Weapons & musical instruments*
4. *Rattan, wood, ceramic, bone, stone & metal work*
5. *Architecture*
    a) Borobudur
        (1) Largest Buddhist monument in the world
        (2) The architectural shape & layout are symbolic representations of the universe as imagined by the ancient Hindus
        (3) "According to Hindu cosmology the world consisted of a large flat continent with a mountain in the center that reaches up to the heavens wee the gods live(Sounds Greek)This continent is ringed by concentric chains of other mountains separated by oceans. The mountain are the link between heaven & earth"
        (4)

G. Middle-Eastern Islam(1300 AD to present)

1. *What is the Islamic Religion?*
    a) founded by the prophet Mohammed
    b) Regarded as the final in a series of prophets including Moses, braham & Jesus.

c) A person who follows Islam is called a Muslim

d) The teachings are written in The Koran and centered in Mecca

e) The basic beliefs are that their is one God-Allah

f) Universal Humanity in which all people are equal in the eyes of God

g) Heavenly influenced by Judisism and Christianity

h) Islam involves a total commitment and surrender to the wisdom of Allah

i) Rules include worshiping five times a day,cleanliness, fasting and if possible making a pilgrimage to Meca

j)

k)

II. Indonesian Islam

1. Largest Islamic population in the world

2. 90% of Indonesia is Islamic

3. Different than Middle-eastern Islam

a) Woman are lowed much more freedom

(1) not required to wear veils

(2) not segregated or considered second class

(3)

b) Museum men can only marry two wives, but only on the consent of the 1st, as opposed to mid-eastern Islam where men can have four wives.

c) Despite the predominance of Muslims in the country the government has not followed the trend of becoming a fundamentalist state

d)

e)

I. Islamic Influence on he visual arts of Indonesia

1. *Masks,costumes, & jewelry*
2. *Cloth*
3. *Weapons & musical instruments*
4. *Rattan, wood, ceramic, bone, stone & metal work*
    a) discourages status or paintings of people or animals (non-iconic religion)
    b) Does allow wood caving, patterns & designs
5. *Architecture*
    a) The Mosque

I. Other Foriegn Influences

1. *The Chinese*
    a) Only 3% but are by far the wealthiest ethnic group in Indonesia as in most of Southeast Asia for they control most of the business.
2. *The Dutch*
    a) Controlled trade in the islands for almost 350 years
    b) brought Christianity and colonial government
    c) Architecture
    d) I was during this period that the Indonesian people , having little control over their economy and government went inward and refined the art, craft and dance forms that exist today
3. *Portguise & British*
    a)
4. *The Japanese*
    a) Occupied Indonesia during WWII
    b) When war ended left an opportunity for independence was created
5. *Communism*

V. Independent Indonesia & the Modern world

A. Social laboratory of the modern world

1. *Millions living on a weak infrastructure with extremely diverse geographical, ethnic, religious and cultural differences*

B. To maintain stability & unity

1. *They have developed a philosophy that tolerates differences between people*
    a) Four things Indonesians are not allowed to make value (better or worse) judgments on:
        (1) Tribe
        (2) Religion (have no power to convert)
        (3) Race
        (4) Traditions
2. *Based on the philosophy called Pancasila*
    a) Belief in God
    b) A Civilized Humanity
    c) Indonesian Unity
    d) Democracy guided by inner wisdom
    e) Social justice for all

C. Influence of the modern world on Visual Arts

1. *Masks,costumes, & jewelry*
2. *Cloth*
3. *Weapons & musical instruments*
    a)
4. *Rattan, wood, ceramic, bone, stone & metal work*
5. *Architecture*
    a) High rises
6. *Artists and craftsman*

a) Fred Elseman comments

7. Pop culture

8. Technology

a) Filmmaking & video

b) computer

c) advertising

Experiences, reflections and thoughts

Indonesia is an independent nation of only 50 years struggling with all the problems associated with the modernization of a developing nation. This huge archipelago spans a distance the width of the United States and is inhabited by worlds fourth largest population. Suprisenly, very few Americans know little, if anything about Indonesia. The primary purpose of the Fulbright-Hayes Summer Seminars is to enhance educators international understanding and knowledge of other countries and share that knowledge with their students back home.

Throughout our four weeks of study in Indonesia, one could see evidence of the powerful forces of economic development at just about every juncture. Construction of skyscrapers, schools and infrastructure coupled with leadership determination not to make the mistakes of other rapidly emerging Asian nations was a common theme heard throughout our trip. From the cab drivers to the highest government officials, one felt genuine sense of national pride and a commitment to move forward without surrendering the rich traditions of the countries culture and heritage. Concern over the control and distribution of a large population was at the for front of most discussions.

"Indonesia is lot more than just the popular islands of Bali and Krakatoa." This was another message we heard over and over again in numerous sessions with the countries top scholars, artists, government and education officials. They saw the 13,000 islands that make up Indonesia as a unique social laboratory from which a new model of democracy was emerging. This "string of emeralds" as it is often called has managed to unified an extremely diverse population of races, religions languages and cultures on a relatively weak infrastructure over a very short period of time.

The national ideological called *Pancasila* requires of every citizen (a) the belief in a God; (b) tolerance for differences between people; (c) humanity in the treatment of citizens; (d) democracy; (e) and a system of social justice. This philosophy provides a sound foundation in a country where religion isn't just a part of daily, life but is completely interwoven with daily life.

The richness of its history, from the early dawn of human kind (Java man) through centuries of international commercial influence has left a rich cultural legacy of art , architecture, music and dance in Indonesia. This wealth of material expression embodies a cross-section of all of the major religious and cultural traditions throughout Asia, as well as a refinement Indonesia's own unique aesthetics and design traditions. I found myself overwhelmed at the abundance of quality crafts, fabrics, jewelry. wood metal and stone work produced across the islands.

It's difficult to describe what its like to arrive in a culture half way around the world that is so different from ones own. Things like airports and skyscrapers are the same, but the landscape, the temperature, cars, traffic, smells, food, the crowds of people and even the light is so strikingly different.

A bus ride from the airport to Jakarta takes one through cultivated rice paddies and a tropical landscape speckled with a small stilted houses. As one moves closer to the city, high rises appear among the congested lower dwellings. People are everywhere, surrounded by mosaics of laundry, patch quilt roofs, trash and traffic. On the street honking cars, buses, trucks and three wheeled vehicles mix with bicycles, animals, bajaks, carts and more people. The radios play loud and vehicles honk constantly, while know one pays any attention to the lines on the road. Its a busy and exciting culture shock for the western traveler. The skyline is surprisingly modern, the landscape unmistakably tropical and there's just a hint of clove mixed in the air polluted with auto exhaust.

The countryside is far less congested, visually stunning and clearly poor. Farmers and their families work the stepped mountain rice paddies where waterfalls, banana and coconut trees abound. The town market places are a delight to experience, especially in the early morning. The rural shopkeepers are even more friendly here than their city counterparts and the food is unmistakenly Asian.

The people of Indonesia are very hospitable towards foreigners always sporting a genuine smile when speaking. The children look at westerners with

curiously while teens and elders will often come up to you to ask where your from?... what your doing?... and were your going? The roots of Indonesian hospitality can be traced to the national slogan of "unity and diversity" or "all are of one nation", with a national exceptance of differences among people. At a very early age children are taught to accept Indonesia's many in races, religions and cultures as a strength and not something to be challenged or made fun of. Even religions groups have no power to convert in Indonesia. Its actually against the law.

The west and, in particular the United States, is looked upon very favorably in Indonesia. I felt an interest and a hunger among the youth of the cities and suburbs for western pop culture. It was evident in the music, fast food restaurants and cloths that are taking hold in most areas . Many of the college and university professors I met had attended graduate schools in the United Stated or in Europe. I found it Interesting however, that very few emigrate. Most believe in Indonesia and want to become part of it's future.

I would like to point out that the Fulbright team was very well taken care of by The Indonesian Intercultural Studies Center. They carefully arranged all transport, language classes, accommodations and scheduling for a variety of sessions while introducing us to a rich cross-section of Indonesian environments and people. We attended weddings and saw funerals, toured small villages, major universities, museums and palaces, met the countries filmmakers and national artists, climbed volcanos, walked beaches and inspected ancient ruins. Each of us had a three night stay with an Indonesian host family, many parting in an emotional farewell. We were especially honored to have an hour long audience with the spiritual leader of the Indonesia- The Sultan at his royal palace.

Upon leaving, everyone in our group spoke of the generosity and kindness our host country and its people had shown us throughout our stay. It was a month where we all found ourselves once again students in a school of international scale. All left enriched with a great deal to share with our educational institutions.